

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
11/10/73

Dear George,

If there is a spare transcript of CBS' JFK show to be aired tomorrow night, I'd appreciate a copy.

I find it interesting that with the 10th anniversary of this turning-point in history so near, to this day only one publication has asked me is there anything new in fact. No net. When I told that publication one of the things I believe could be tolerated today, one that gives the whole trauma of the official investigation a context that makes for comprehension, they were excited, sent a staffer who stayed here for two days, and when he took back xeroxes of this new (to everyone except me) evidence, they were so impressed they then sent a photographer so they'd have the documents on film rather than xerox. Great excitement. It was to be the big thing. Then this past Monday, too late for me to even offer it to any other publication, they let me know of their change of mind. It involved a dead man. True, Russell. But they had confirmation from two of his former staffers of what needed no confirmation. They had never seen as many TOP SECRET stamps as I provided. At any time this would, by normal standards, be a great story. More in Watergate time. Thus it will not be told. Instead representative society will be made to work better by schmalz and I suspect a bit of revisionist history. And, of course, sick stuff like Executive Action. I've declined invitations to several previews having read the book.

Had anyone called back after we spoke he'd have known that Ford swore falsely Monday and he'd have known in advance for it was as certain as the day-night cycle. He'd also have had what once would have been considered a story, a CIA story, where Jaworski has already lied and two reporters have been told that CIA continued their secret-funding work after they announced its end, by two Jaworski associates, each independently.

Maybe the country will be better off with a petty crook and a petty liar for vice president. Lying under oath today is the norm anyone, not news any more.

There is a nice touch in this, the Nixon with the phobia about leaks picks as a vice president a man who copyrighted and sold his. I have been trying to get what he leaked for years and it is still classified, after he published it. As of yesterday it was still vlassified "Top Secret."

I guess I'm just an old fogey who doesn't leameasily. The kind of thing my old-fashioned beliefs has trouble with is the last page of the totally-unreported CA 71-1026 decision. Free press has become divisible and what makes prior restraint look like a blessing is not news. Nor was it news when I filed a rather strong petition for an en banc rehearing of the en banc rehearing, a kind of legal man-bites-dog maneuver.

Danaher was right in his REQUIESCAT IN PACE, something I'd never expect to see in a court decision. I wonder is it will be either rest or peace.

But I do try to keep up with the rewriting of history, which requires of the rewriter little more than a willingness. My second book would have been on JFK's policies. I did not begin as his partisan, nor is it emotion that converted me. Had it not been for the basically evil doctrine of the work that followed mine, particularly Lane's and Epstein's, my second book, by then researched, would have been on JFK's changes. I'll do it yet, thus my special interest in this transcript.

Thanks and best regards,

Harold Weisberg

A Fresh Look at JFK: Toward a TV Realism

By Michael Kernan
PWA 1/13

We are a decade beyond Dallas, and a CBS special report, "JFK: One Thousand Days—and Ten Years" (Sunday at 6 p.m.) gives a welcome fresh look at John Kennedy minus the romanticizing.

Up to now, most films about him have more or less followed the lead of Bruce Herschensohn's manipulative and offensively maudlin "Years of Lightning, Day of Drums." Now, apparently, CBS correspondent John Hart has decided the American public is ready for another view of Kennedy.

It is still too soon for a realistic appraisal of his presidency, especially in a one-hour show, but this is a good try.

Kennedy is seen dealing with the Bay of Pigs (of which we get some rare footage: nobody likes to cover a losing battle), the confrontation with Khrushchev that led to the Berlin wall, the Cuban missile crisis, the space program, the nuclear test ban treaty—and Vietnam.

In rhythmical sequence, Kennedy addresses various press groups while the words are overprinted on the image: Feb. 7, 1962, American troops in Vietnam: 5,420. April 11, 1962, American troops in Vietnam: 5,850. Dec. 12, 1962, American troops in Vietnam: 11,300. Sept. 2, 1963, American troops in Vietnam: 16,200.

Sometimes it appears that the commentator is bending over backward to keep from

See JFK, C6, Col. 2



JFK: New realism

Beyond Dallas

JFK, From C1

idolizing JFK. "Let's face it, we fell for the Kennedys," he says. "The President seduced and manipulated the press. With elegant words and a natural wit."

His speeches have dated, too. Like Churchill's and Roosevelt's lush prose, Kennedy's ringing phrases often come over as merely pompous, and in "the eternal struggle of liberty against tyranny." Particularly they sound hollow when contrasted with Kennedy's normal delivery at press conferences and interviews. Here,

he shows an ease and sincerity that are not only engaging but utterly convincing. It has been a long time since Americans have heard such natural approachable sounds coming from a President.

In keeping with this low-key, rational treatment, the show stops short of Dallas. But not before we get one long mistily idyllic color shot of the family romping on the lawn with Caroline's horse—while Judy Garland sings "Over the Rainbow" from an echo chamber. Arrrgh.